

Wisely, from his standpoint, Hart is holding in reserve his divisive challenge to 600 Mondale delegates allegedly "tainted" by having been won through the efforts of delegate committees which accepted PAC contributions. Hart has been publicly downplaying his previous threats to bring such a challenge, in keeping with his sought-after new image of positive thinker and party unifier. Yet in the convention credentials committee, Carol Casey has been working to preserve Hart's right to activate such a challenge to the convention floor. Donilon, Mondale's representative, has been arguing that such a move would violate party rules which require credentials challenges to be posted immediately after the primaries in which an error allegedly occurred. If he decides to push the "taint" issue, Hart presumably would try to put his challenge in such a way that all 600 Mondale delegates would be barred from voting on challenged delegates in any state. This too violates party rules and precedents, but the ultimate authority over the rules is the convention itself. If the delegates decide they don't want Mondale, they will invent the means not to nominate him. Unlike the 1980 convention, delegates this year are not legally bound to vote for any candidate.

Another vehicle could be Jesse Jackson's so-called "democracy" challenge, based on his failure under 1984 party rules to win delegates in proportion to his primary showing. The rules were written—with some of Jackson's key supporters present, though before they knew there would be a Jackson candidacy—precisely to eliminate minority candidates from the race. No one anticipated, however, that the candidate most affected would be a black, and so the party may feel conscience-bound to rectify an unfairness done to Jackson. Strict rectification, however, would add about 285 delegates to Jackson's total. If they came out of Mondale's delegate column, that would cost him the nomination. At the moment there are rumors—but only rumors—of a Hart-Jackson alliance at the convention to stop Mondale.

MONDALE'S CURRENT strategy against Hart seems to be to keep his delegate lead growing, make his nomination seem inevitable, and concentrate on convention-planning and general election tactics as if Hart's candidacy were a bygone problem. Mondale hopes that Hart will get discouraged with his lack of progress and find a face-saving way to effectively quit campaigning while formally staying in the race—possibly according to the model established in 1976 by Representative Morris Udall. Against Jackson, Mondale apparently plans to pick some carefully selected fights on platform issues such as the Middle East and defense budgets in order to establish his independence, yet also reach some compromises with Jackson on other issues such as runoff primaries to ensure Jackson's full support in the fall.

One obvious possibility for preempting a Hart challenge and preparing for the general election would be to give the Colorado Senator the No. 2 spot on the ticket. My guess, though, is that Mondale's choice, if it's his to make, won't be Hart because Hart wouldn't be a supportive, Mondale-

like Vice President. I don't think it will be a woman, whose qualifications to be President (rather than Reagan's record) would become the key issue of the campaign. And I don't think it will be Senator Lloyd Bentsen of Texas, who would help carry his home state, but would be too conventional and conservative a choice. Senator Dale Bumpers of Arkansas or Governor Robert Graham of Florida—both young, attractive southerners—are better bets.

All of this ought to work. Logically and politically, Mondale should be able to hold his delegates and win the nomination. And yet, there remains the slightest chance—10 percent, perhaps—that this latest of Mondale's inevitabilities could dissolve as his other ones have. Beyond logic and politics, something ineffable is missing from Mondale's connection to the Democratic Party. It's partly glandular and partly intellectual. "Passion" is probably the word for it. After all his efforts, and achievements, it would be cruel for the party to deny Mondale the nomination based on its absence, just as it's cruel when one person falls out of love with another. It happens, though, and political conventions occasionally become overtaken by emotion just as individuals do. If it happens this year, the convention might well not even settle on Gary Hart, but look for someone else instead. The chances are that nothing of the kind will happen, but it would help Mondale and the Democratic Party's slim chances against Reagan if Hart would withdraw soon and make Mondale truly inevitable at last.

MORTON KONDRAKE

Egypt after controlled elections.

MUBARAK'S OPENING

Cairo

ON THE eve of parliamentary elections in late May, the bearded, octogenarian leader of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood (*Ikhwan Al-Muslimin*), Sheikh Omar Telmessani, returned to Cairo from a hospital in Switzerland. "My heart, my kidneys, everything is wrong with me," he said with a laugh. Temperate in his public remarks, and evincing a hardheaded empiricism that is rare in this part of the world, Sheikh Telmessani is a reassuring figure for Westerners harboring nightmarish visions of an Egyptian Ayatollah Khomeini: "Differences between Egypt and Israel must be solved through negotiation and not by war or violence, he told me in passable English. Russia is worse than America. Every person who believes in God is nearer to us than those who don't."

But the sheikh is also a wily politician, and in explaining his current alliance with the new *Wafd* Party—which enabled the outlawed Brotherhood to participate in the elec-

tions—he revealed himself to be a revisionist historian as well. "We never do violent deeds," he said. "My career in life has been based on peace and love."

Not quite. In the late 1940s, the Muslim Brotherhood was responsible for the murders of two Egyptian prime ministers, originally *Wafdist*s; and in 1954 for the attempted assassination of President Gamal Abdel Nasser. The *Ikhwan* was founded in 1929 by Hassan El-Banna, and it wasn't long before it adopted terrorism as a tactic. But in recent years the *Ikhwan* has taken advantage of a gradual liberalization of the Egyptian political process to improve its position by peaceful means, and its image, like that of Telmessani himself, is now a respectable one.

The *Ikhwan* runs reputable clinics and hospitals around the country. *Ikhwan* officials say they see no alternative to President Hosni Mubarak's pro-Western foreign policy. And they favor the adoption of Islamic law for Muslims only. "The Brotherhood in Egypt is more a social than a political organization," said a Western diplomat.

But like the Egyptian landscape—whose pigments are dulled by the dust from the surrounding desert and the mud of the Nile—the *Ikhwan* is concealed in layer upon layer of ambiguity and historical complexity. There are the more extreme fringe groups, like *Takfir Wa Hegira* ("Purging and Spiritual Passage") and *Jihad* ("Holy War"), the latter of which was responsible for the October 1981 assassination of Anwar Sadat. The murder bore striking similarities to the 1949 assassination of Prime Minister Nukrashy Pasha carried out by the *Ikhwan*. Then there is the rank-and-file of the *Ikhwan*. "Telmessani is an effective front man, but what's below him . . . who knows?" said a diplomat in Cairo.

ONE THING, however, is clear: the Brotherhood is a cause with a future. One Egyptian journalist claims that if the May 27 elections had been truly free and the *Ikhwan* had been allowed to run on its own, instead of having to join forces with the *Wafd*, then "70 percent of Egypt would vote *Ikhwan*." Many dispute that claim, but nobody in Egypt denies that traditional religion is undergoing a dramatic revival. The same journalist explained, "We tried the Soviet way, the American way, and the peace-with-Israel way. Nothing changed. All these answers failed. Islam, on the other hand, always has an answer for us."

In other quarters too, strong religious sentiment is apparent. The Coptic churches have never been so crowded. In the alleys of old Cairo, the groans of Coptic hymns—sung in the vernacular of Pharaonic Egypt—rebound off the mudbrick walls. The Copts, who were the world's first converts to Christianity and who trace their lineage back to the Pharaohs, originally fought with the Muslims to repel Byzantine invaders. But ever since the Medieval period, tension and intercommunal violence have often characterized the relationship between Christian and Muslim in Egypt. (The Copts currently account for approximately 20 percent of the population.) In recent months, Copts have been targets of attacks by the *Takfir Wa Hegira* in the

Fayyoum region south of Cairo. Coptic Pope Shenouda III remains in desert seclusion, where he was exiled by Sadat in 1981 in a general crackdown on dissidents and extremists. Although Mubarak has allowed the pope to resume his responsibilities, it is believed that the President fears that the patriarch's life would be in danger if he returned to Cairo.

In a city where the population density in the worst quarters is three times greater than in Calcutta, it's not hard to understand why there should be communal tensions, or why a disaffected urban proletariat—as in Iran—should seek religion as a palliative. Notwithstanding President Mubarak's emphasis on domestic development—he likes to cut ribbons at new highway overpasses—infrastructure and services are barely keeping up with a population now numbering 46 million. (Every ten months the population grows by 1 million.) Until now, stability has been purchased by subsidizing the cost of bread, paid in part by the United States. But another line of defense is needed. As President Mubarak told the populace in a televised address on election eve: "Democracy is a shield and a safety valve against internal upheavals."

PRESIDENT MUBARAK, who spent twenty-six years in the air force before becoming Sadat's vice president in 1975, is a cautious man. And the form of democracy he has decided upon—in keeping with a country whose illiteracy rate of 70 percent is still rising—is a measured one. Still, compared to the tyranny of the Nasser years and the charades of the Sadat era, May 27 represented a quantum leap forward in Egypt's internal development. Though five shooting incidents and sporadic rioting marred the polling, Egypt didn't do too badly in comparison with electoral violence in other Third World countries—India, for example. And some of it occurred in rural areas where ideology often gets twisted up in family and personal feuds. Furthermore, although the 72.9 percent of the vote garnered by the ruling National Democratic Party wasn't totally deserved, at least it was an improvement over the 99 percent pluralities of previous Egyptian elections.

Nevertheless, the violence, which claimed two lives and over a dozen wounded, gave an inkling of what could be expected if Egypt's experiment with democracy goes any further.

Since the days of the Old Kingdom over four thousand years ago, any weakening of the central authority in Egypt has always led to the collapse of the state. President Mubarak, who according to insiders is authoritarian by nature, is not about to let that happen. Mubarak hopes to maintain internal stability through his version of democracy, just as Nasser did through the nationalization of the Suez Canal, and Sadat through the political success of the 1973 war. Democracy under Mubarak seems to be an imperfect, Turkish-style variety, with the President and the military controlling all of the security levers; and a Prime Minister and Parliament—composed only of parties sanctioned by the President—taking some of the responsibility, and much of the blame, for problems. One resident

American commented after the elections, "Now at least Egyptians have a Parliament to blame instead of having to blame the United States."

And with the new *Wafd* claiming 57 seats in the 448-member People's Assembly—nearly twice as many opposition seats as in the last Parliament—Mubarak will have someone to whom he can always point when things go wrong: 73-year-old *Wafd* leader Fuad Serageddin. To borrow an observation from the late President Sadat about the *Wafd*, democracy in Egypt is causing a lot of mummies to wriggle in their tombs.

ENTERING Serageddin's baroque mansion in the Garden City section of Cairo is like stepping back into the decadent era of King Farouk. With much of his wealth expropriated by previous governments, Serageddin—the story goes—lacks the means to keep up his "palace," which with its musty bookshelves and broken skylights has taken on the seedy air of Chatsworth: one could almost imagine Miss Havisham combing the corridors at night. Reclining with a cigar beside a large bust of himself, and surrounded by portraits of former *Wafd* leaders attired in *tarboosh*, "His Excellency"—as he is often called—is a living reminder of why Nasser organized the Free Officers movement in 1952 and threw out the Egyptian aristocracy.

Some say that the *Wafd*'s popularity among the middle class is an "exercise in nostalgia," and that by voting *Wafd*, Egyptians are turning their backs on the 1952 revolution. More likely it's that the Egyptians just want a change, or at least some focal point of effective opposition.

Like Telmessani, Serageddin dismissed the bad blood between the Muslim Brotherhood and the *Wafd* with a wave of the hand. When I brought up the rival militias of the 1940s, his response was: "Where did you read that? It never happened." Yet there is no denying that the *Wafd* and the *Ikhwan* are unlikely partners. As an illegal group, the *Ikhwan* was forbidden to campaign on its own, and the pre-election alliance with Serageddin—which will net the *Ikhwan* several of the *Wafd*'s parliamentary seats—was the next best option. How successful the marriage will be is a good question. More significant, however, is the future of the relationship between the new Parliament as a whole and Mubarak: a relationship which might further complicate the one between Egypt and the United States.

According to one prominent Egyptian writer, who is every inch an insider, Mubarak will now more than ever seek to establish a consensus for the conduct of foreign policy—a consensus that will take opposition views strongly into account. And as anyone here will tell you, the consensus in Egypt is increasingly hostile toward the United States and opposed to a real peace with Israel. (The majority of Egyptians are willing to abide only by the letter, and not by the spirit, of the Camp David accords.) Cairo's foreign policy for months now has borne the markings of electoral politics. Efforts to normalize relations with the Soviet Union were and are to be expected—in April Mubarak expressed a desire to again exchange ambassadors. In contrast, the statements about the United States by top

Egyptian officials in the weeks prior to the elections were distinctly hostile. Dr. Osama El Baz, director of President Mubarak's Office for Political Affairs, referring to the abrupt manner of the Marines' withdrawal from Lebanon, said sharply: "You're concerned exclusively with the safety of your own people and the hell with the others."

Moreover, Mubarak's ability to repair the atmosphere of peace seems increasingly doubtful. In April former Israeli foreign minister Abba Eban met with Mubarak in Cairo, but the Egyptian government gave the visit no publicity. A little democracy might be good for Egypt, but what it portends for future relations with Israel and the United States is another matter. As restrictions on the press loosen up, anti-Western attitudes are becoming more pronounced.

The Egyptian military, strengthened by American arms and under the direction of a staunchly pro-American defense minister, Abdel Hali Abu Ghazala, has been less significant in the domestic political equation than some analysts first thought—and hoped. Mubarak may be steering his country toward Turkish-style democracy, but by no means is he a Turkish general: if anything, as a diplomat here noted, Mubarak resembles Eisenhower in the way he has turned his back on his military past. None of the people he is bringing into the N.D.P. to replace former Sadat cronies are from the armed forces. Abu Ghazala is certainly a man to keep an eye on, but as one analyst put it: "Under Nasser, America's relations with Egypt were abnormally bad, under Sadat they were abnormally good, and now under Mubarak they are finally normal."

THREE IS little to indicate that Egypt's relations with Israel or with the United States will get any warmer. Although the United States provides Egypt with \$1 billion a year for 66 development projects (the largest nonmilitary aid program in the world), it receives no real political payoff in return. None of the projects are "high profile" in nature, explained Michael P. W. Stone, director of the U.S. Agency for International Development in Egypt. "The Nile is the main artery for everything here, and the Russians built the [Aswan] dam, and I can't think of anything we could do in the same category." In fact, American aid in Egypt may amount to little more than a bribe—to make sure that Mubarak keeps his part of the Camp David bargain.

In his book on Egypt's relationship with the Soviet Union, *The Sphinx and the Commissar*, Mohamed Hassanein Heikal, former editor of the Cairo daily *Al Ahram*, tells how the Russians foresaw that Egypt's financial and military demands could not be countenanced indefinitely. But they were powerless to prevent Sadat's eventual betrayal. Like the Soviet Union, the United States may find that its long-term investment in Egypt is a hollow pyramid.

ROBERT D. KAPLAN

Robert D. Kaplan is an Athens-based correspondent for the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* and ABC Radio News.

Copyright of New Republic is the property of New Republic and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.